

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAC-00 INRE-00 ICA-11
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FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN
TO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE
SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7158
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PDEV, WA, SF
SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: SOUTH AFRICA AWAITS WORD FROM LONDON

1. SUMMARY: THE FOREIGN MINISTER HAS SAID PUBLICLY HE EXPECTS TO RECEIVE AN ANSWER FROM THE WEST TODAY IN REGARDS SECURITY IN NAMIBIA DURING THE TRANSITION PERIOD. THE AG HAS STATED THAT IF THE WESTERN PLAN IS ACCEPTED, IT WOULD HAVE TO BE IMPLEMENTED WITHIN A MATTER OF WEEKS. MEANWHILE, THE SOUTH AFRICAN PRESS, APRIL 24, HAS REPEATED LONDON STORY ON US POSITION ON WALVIS BAY, DISCUSSED CABINET SPLIT OVER THE NAMIBIAN ISSUE, AND NOTED POSSIBILITY OF INDEPENDENCE
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DATE SLIPPING BEYOND DECEMBER 31. END SUMMARY.

2. FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA, ON SABC-TV LAST NIGHT, APRIL 23, SAID THAT SOUTH AFRICA WAS EXPECTING AN ANSWER TODAY FROM THE WEST ON THE QUESTIONS THAT HAD BEEN RAISED BY SOUTH AFRICA. BOTHA SAID THE WESTERN COUNTRIES HAD BEEN ASKED BY BOTH SOUTH AFRICA AND SWAPO TO

EXPLAIN CERTAIN POINTS IN THEIR PROPOSAL, AND THE WESTERN FOREIGN MINISTERS' DISCUSSIONS HAD MAINLY DEALT WITH SECURITY ASPECTS OF THE PROBLEM.

3. ADMINISTRATOR GENERAL STEYN ALSO APPEARED ON TELEVISION YESTERDAY AND SAID THAT THE STAGE HAD BEEN REACHED WHERE A FINAL DECISION ON THE FUTURE OF THE TERRITORY WOULD HAVE TO BE MADE SOON, DEFINING THE WORD "SOON" AS WITHIN A MATTER OF WEEKS. STEYN EMPHASIZED THAT THE ISSUES INVOLVED WERE SO VITAL, ENORMOUS AND FAR-REACHING THAT EVERYTHING POSSIBLE HAD TO BE DONE, EVEN IF IT MEANT SACRIFICING A FURTHER AMOUNT OF CONFIDENCE IN THE TERRITORY. STEYN ADDED THAT IF SWAPO DECIDED AGAINST PARTICIPATION IN AN ELECTION IN THE TERRITORY, IT WOULD BE THAT ORGANIZATION'S CHOICE, BUT IT SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO PREVENT THE OTHER POLITICAL PARTIES FROM DOING SO.

4. COMMENT: IN HIS REFERENCE TO A FINAL DECISION WITHIN A MATTER OF WEEKS, WE BELIEVE STEYN WAS NOT SUGGESTING THAT THE SAG DECISION COULD BE PUT OFF FOR THAT PERIOD BUT THAT THIS WAS THE TIME TO FRAME FOR FINAL AGREEMENT ON THE PROPOSAL BY ALL THE PARTIES CONCERNED AND INITIATION OF THE PLAN.

5. THE SOUTH AFRICAN PRESS APRIL 24 REPEATED SUNDAY RAPPORT ITEM FROM LONDON THAT THE US HAS PRIVATELY PROMISED BACKING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FOR SWAPO'S CLAIM FOR WALVIS BAY BEING INCORPORATED IN INDEPENDENT NAMIBIA (CAPE TOWN 806, 807). ACCORDING TO THE CAPE TIMES, APRIL 24, DIPLOMATIC SOURCES IN CAPE TOWN WERE SKEPTICAL OF THESE REPORTS. REACTING TO THE REPORT, FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA WAS QUOTED AS SAYING "IT IS OUR FIRM UNDERSTANDING THAT THIS IS NOT THE CASE AT ALL. WALVIS BAY IS NOT PART OF THE NEGOTIATIONS. THIS WAS CONFIRMED BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE HIMSELF AT OUR MEETING IN PRETORIA LAST WEEKEND". SIR DAVID SCOTT, THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR, APPROACHED BY THE CAPE TIMES, SAID "IT IS NOT FOR ME TO SPEAK FOR THE AMERICANS, BUT ON THE OTHER HAND I CANNOT BELIEVE THIS IS TRUE".

6 THE CAPE TIMES, APRIL 24, REPORTED THAT ITS SOUNDINGS OF DIPLOMATIC AND POLITICAL CIRCLES INDICATED THERE IS A 60-40 CHANCE OF ACCEPTANCE OF THE PROPOSAL. THE CAPE TIMES NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT AKTUR WAS STILL STRONGLY CANVASSING AGAINST THE PROPOSAL AND THAT THIS COULD CREATE "SERIOUS DIVISION IN THE PARTY AND IN THE CABINET". IN THE MOST DIRECT PUBLIC DISCUSSION TO DATE OF THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL RAMIFICATION OF THE SAG DECISION ON NAMIBIA, FLEUR DE VILLIERS IN THE APRIL 23 SUNDAY TIMES REPORTED THAT THE GOVT IS "BADLY DIVIDED ON THE PLAN AND THAT THE PLIT EXTENDS RIGHT UP TO THE CABINET".

THE SOUTH WEST ISSUE, DE VILLERS SAID, " IS SEEN AS MERELY
ANOTHER STRATEGY IN A VERKRAMPTE INSPIRED ATTEMPT TO OUTMANEUVER
THE VERLIGTES IN THE INCREASINGLY BITTER BATTLE FOR THE
PREMIERSHIP STAKES".

7. MEANWHILE, THE PRO-SAG CITIZEN, APRIL 21, REPORTED THAT
SEVERAL SWA POLITICAL GROUPS WANT THE DEADLINE FOR
INDEPENDENCE TO BE POSTPONED FROM DEC 31 TO FEBRUARY OR MARCH
NEXT YEAR. THESE UNNAMED GROUPS REPORTEDLY FEEL A
POSTPONEMENT IS NECESSARY BECAUSE OF THE DELAY IN OBTAINING
SECURITY COUNCIL ACCEPTANCE OF THE WESTERN PROPOSAL. GOVT
SOURCES, ACCORDING TO THE CITIZEN, CONSIDER THAT IF SUCH AN
EXTENSION IS GRANTED, IT SHOULD BE JUST LONG ENOUGH TO MEET
THE MINIMUM TIME-TABLE SET DOWN IN THE WESTERN PROPOSAL.
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